

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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C O N F I D E N T I A L THESSALONIKI 0744

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJECT: NORTHERN GREECE ON EVE OF ELECTIONS

REF: (A) THESSALONIKI 705, (B) THESSALONIKI A-39,

(C) THESSALONIKI 730

1. SUMMARY: IN WEEK SINCE ASSESSMENT CONTAINED REF A, CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES OF ALL MAJOR PARTIES HAVE INTENSIFIED IN NORTHERN GREECE. FINAL SLATES PUBLISHED NOV 12, AND HIGH TURNOUT EXPECTED BY APPROX 1.6 MILLION VOTERS HERE. DESPITE RUMORS OF POSSIBLE STUDENT DISORDERS HERE ON NOVEMBER 17 POLYTECHNIC ANNIVERSARY (ELECTION DAY), OUTLOOK IS FOR ORDER AT LOCAL POLLING PLACES. WHILE KARAMANLIS LIKELY TO GAIN SOME LAST MINUTE SUPPORT, CONGEN STICKS BY ROUGH ESTIMATES FOR NORTHERN GREECE CONTAINED PARA 5, REF A. END SUMMARY.

2. PARTY SLATES.

A. NEW DEMOCRACY (ND), CENTER UNION (CU), AND PAN HELLENIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (PASOK) LIST CANDIDATES FOR ALL 73 SEATS FROM NORTHERN GREECE, WHILE UNITED LEFT IS SHORT THREE CANDIDATES AND GAROUFALIAS PARTY (EDE) MINUS 22 (REF B). OF THESE, NEW DEMOCRACY HAS 29 FORMER

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DEPUTIES RUNNING AND CENTER UNION HAS 21, BOTH DISTRIBUTED

IN 14 OF 17 LOCAL DISTRICTS. BY CONTRAST, UNITED LEFT SLATES HAVE ONLY 6 EX-DEPUTIES, PASOK 3, AND EDE 2. ELEVEN WOMEN ARE CANDIDATES IN NORTHERN GREECE, 6 FOR UNITED LEFT.

B. GIVEN LACK OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN PAST DECADE AND UNFAMILIARITY OF ELECTORATE WITH MANY CANDIDATES, CONGEN BELIEVES HIGHER NUMBER OF FORMER DEPUTIES RUNNING FOR ND AND CU LIKELY TO BE STRONG POSITIVE FACTOR. BOTH PARTIES, HOWEVER, CAREFULLY BALANCING FORMER POLITICIANS WITH YOUNGER CANDIDATES STYLED AS "NEW MEN FOR NEW ERA".

### 3. FINAL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

A. HIGHLIGHTS OF LOCAL NEW DEMOCRACY CAMPAIGN OVER PAST WEEK HAVE BEEN SPEECHES IN THESSALONIKI AND MAJOR NORTHERN GREEK CENTERS BY CONSTANTINOS TSATSOS, GEORGE RALLIS, AND DEMETRIOS MAKRIS. CU LEADER MAVROS SPOKE AT KILKIS, DRAMA AND KAVALA NOVEMBER 9 AND WILL CONCLUDE NORTHERN GREEK CAMPAIGN NOVEMBER 15 AT XANTHI, KOMOTINI AND ALEXANDROUPOLIS. PAPANDREOU CONCLUDED 5-DAY AREA TOUR NOVEMBER 6 WHICH INCLUDED 13 MAJOR TOWNS OF MACEDONIA AND THRACE. HIGHLIGHT OF LOCAL UNITED LEFT CAMPAIGN WAS NOVEMBER 10 THESSALONIKI SPEECH BY FLORAKIS TO ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD ESTIMATED UP TO 35,000 (REF C). OTHER COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES HERE, INCLUDING NOVEMBER 14 RALLY BY PRO-CHINESE EKKE, HAVE REFLECTED CONTINUING SPLITS. EDE CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN LIMITED TO ACTIVITIES OF INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES AND THESSALONIKI SPEECH BY GAROUFALIAS LATE NOVEMBER 14. LATTER, WHICH ATTENDED BY ESTIMATED 500 SUPPORTERS, WAS DISRUPTED BY CROWD OF WELL OVER 25,000 HECKLERS AND CURIOUS. (SEPTTEL).

### 4. ELECTION PROSPECTS

A. SINCE LAST ASSESSMENT (REF A), CONGEN BELIEVES PERCENTAGE OF VOTE PROJECTED FOR EDE AND UNITED LEFT HAS REMAINED CONSTANT, ALTHOUGH PASOK REPORTEDLY DRAWING SOME FORMER COMMUNIST VOTERS. WHILE PASOK CONTINUES TO

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SHOW STRONG LOCAL ORGANIZATION, BOTH BY DISTRICT AND OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY, MUCH OF HOOPLA APPEARS TO BE GENERATED BY STUDENTS AND YOUTH, MANY OF WHOM UNLIKELY TO VOTE. OUTSIDE CITIES, PAPANDREOU BELIEVED TO HAVE ATTRACTED LITTLE SUPPORT AND, DURING PAST WEEK, CU CANDIDATES CLAIM ACTUALLY TO BE DRAWING AWAY PASOK VOTERS. CENTER UNION STILL SHOWING BROAD SUPPORT, BUT ITS FINAL SHARE OF VOTE WILL DEPEND ON STRENGTH OF

LOCAL LAST-MINUTE SWELL FOR KARAMANLIS. IF STRONG,  
LATTER COULD CUT APPRECIABLY INTO PROJECTED CU VOTE.  
IN SUM, FULLY RECOGNIZING PITFALLS OF ATTEMPTING  
CRYSTAL-BALL OUTCOME LESS THAN FOUR MONTHS AFTER END  
OF TEN-YEAR ELECTORAL HIATUS, CONGEN'S BEST ESTIMATE OF VOTING  
RESULTS IN NORTHERN GREECE REMAINS ABOUT THAT GIVEN  
IN PARA. 5 OF OUR 705, WITH POSSIBLE LATE KARAMANLIS  
SURGE PICKING UP ADDITIONAL VOTES, LARGELY AT CU'S EXPENSE.

B. WHILE RUMORS CIRCULATING RE STUDENT ATTEMPTS TO DISRUPT  
LOCAL BALLOTING NOVEMBER 17, MOST OBSERVERS HERE BELIEVE  
VOTE WILL PROCEED WITHOUT SERIOUS INCIDENT. ALL ARMY UNITS  
IN THIS AREA, WITH EXCEPTION OF ESA MP'S, ON FULL  
RESTRICTION TO BARRACKS AND CAMPS FROM NOVEMBER 11  
THROUGH ELECTIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

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